

The Daily Charge

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"Telling the First Team's Story"

Monday, Nov. 20, 2006



(Photo by Maj. David Hernandez, 210th BSB, 2nd BCT 10th Mtn. Div.)

Team work

Medics from the 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI), carry a wounded Iraqi to a medical evacuation helicopter at Forward Operating Base Gator Swamp in Yusafiyah, Iraq, southwest of Baghdad, Nov. 14.

Soldiers help Iraqi children through support of Americans

By Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie
2nd BCT Public Affairs, 10th Mtn. Div.

RADWANIYAH, Iraq - Jasmine, an Iraqi child with un-kept hair and dressed in tattered clothes, reached her hand out for a pair of shoes. She was not concerned with the brand, style or even the size of the

shoes. She simply wanted a pair of shoes to replace the sandals she was wearing - sandals which were too small, causing her toes to touch the pavement when she walked.

Providing needed items such as this was a highlight for Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers from the

210th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, who assisted in handing out anything from shoes to shampoo to Iraqi children like Jasmine at the Civil Military Operations Center in Radwaniyah, south-

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More than 365 days later:**Stryker Brigade getting job done in Baghdad****By Spc. L.B. Edgar
7th MPAD**

BAGHDAD - One day in a war zone is a lifetime for some people. Now, increase that to approximately 16 months of dedicated service and you begin to understand the sacrifice of the Soldiers of the 172nd Stryker Brigade.

"We're doing our jobs to the best of our abilities and we're doing it until we come home," said Spc. Virgilio Rivera, an infantryman with Troop C, 4th Battalion, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade.

Until redeployment, the Soldiers press on, the 26 year-old Tacoma, Wash., native said.

Missions for the Stryker Soldiers change from day to day. Their mission Nov. 14 took them to a Baghdad hospital, to provide security for a civil affairs team making pub-

lic health assessments for the Iraqi Ministry of Health, said Staff Sgt. Arthur Meyers, a head team leader and section sergeant with Troop C.

He said success is always more than accomplishing the mission. It happens, he said "every day when I come in the wire and my guys are all there."

But that hasn't always been the case over the past year for this 40-year-old father of two. Watching comrades-in-arms get hurt is the hardest part of soldiering, Meyers said.

"Knowing I've got a wife and kids, knowing I bring the fight to (the terrorists) and they don't bring it to us," keeps me going, he said.

For all the dangers involved, Rivera said he still sees many positives from his year in Iraq.

"The interesting people you meet and places you go make you see another side,

instead of just IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and terrorists," Rivera said.

That other side Soldiers see is simply daily life in Iraq.

Meyers walked past a newborn being held by its joyful parents and said, "That's what it's all about - knowing there is going to be a free Iraq."



(Photo by Spc. L.B. Edgar, 7th MPAD)

A prematurely-born Iraqi infant is held by a nurse at Baghdad Teaching Hospital while Air Force Capt. Samantha Elmore, public affairs specialist, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, documents the patient's information.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

laa afham

**Defined: I don't
understand**

Iraq 3-Day Forecast



Today

**High: 68
Low: 48**



Tomorrow

**High: 65
Low: 40**



Wednesday

**High: 66
Low: 44**

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Americans donations are appreciated by children

Children

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east of Baghdad.

"I wanted to be able to do something nice to help the community and show the Iraqis we are here to help them," said Michelle Winicki, a medic with the 210th BSB.

The items the Soldiers passed out to the children came from the support of the American people in the form of a 'Victory Box,' filled with items to give to the Iraqis.

The Victory Boxes were started by Mary Halleck, of Colleyville, Texas. Halleck originally started sending boxes to Soldiers who had no

families to send them anything.

After sending numerous care packages to Soldiers, Halleck received a letter from a Soldier asking her if she would be able to send school supplies to the Iraqi children.

After a few fund-raisers, Halleck and her friends came up with the idea of Victory Boxes - boxes containing goods needed for the Iraqi people to help them in their fight for freedom.

"I've never really done anything for my country," Halleck said. "I envisioned our (American) families sending boxes to the people of Iraq through the Soldiers."

"The support (that the Iraqi people are receiving) is great,"

said Sgt. Billie Caperton, a medic with 210th BSB. "It feels like the Iraqis want us here, and it feels good that the American people understand they (the Iraqi people) are in a tough situation and want to help the Iraqis."

Unlike the majority of children who ask for the latest video game, name-brand clothes or a new toy, the Iraqi children ask for basic necessities that most take for granted - items like shampoo, shoes, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Most of the children asking for the items have never had the money to buy products to wash their hair or brush their teeth.

For them, these items are

special.

The simple act of giving the Iraqi children basic items has led to the discovery of dangerous weapons and improvised-explosive devices. Sometimes when the Iraqi children recognize Soldiers who have helped them, they show the Soldiers where such dangerous weapons are located.

"Giving the children items they need helps them get over the fear of people (Soldiers) in uniform," said Capt. Mark Griffin, a civil affairs officer, who operates with the 2nd BCT, a native of San Antonio. "It shows them that people in uniform are not bad."

With the help of people like Halleck, Soldiers are able to help the Iraqi people.

"This is a great program because there is such a huge need for supplies in Iraq," Griffin said.

"When the American people get involved, it helps us push products out and give the Iraqi people a better shot at standing up their country. They are given the things they need to survive," he said.

Currently, the 2nd BCT Soldiers are helping get these special boxes out to the Iraqi people.

Overall, there have been approximately 5,000 boxes sent to Soldiers.

"These boxes are from the American people to the Iraqi people through the Soldiers," Halleck added.

Now, with the support of the American people, Iraqi children like Jasmine will be able to wear a pair of shoes that fit, wash their hair and brush their teeth.

For more information about Victory Boxes log on to www.victoryboxes.com.



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Angela McKinzie, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. Public Affairs)

Sgt. Billie Caperton (left), a medic with the 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain Division, hands an Iraqi child a toy during a visit to the Civil Military Operations Center in Radwanayah, southeast of Baghdad. The items given to children were sent from American citizens in the form of victory boxes - boxes that contain basic supplies to help the Iraqi children.

Cav trooper fishing for an escape

By Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - This is a war that Pfc. Andrew Williams enjoys fighting every chance he gets. It begins as he hooks one and ignites a tug-of-war battle for victory.

The battlefield is Camp Liberty's "Z Lake." The battle is fishing.

Williams, a member of Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, fishes in Baghdad to put his mind at ease during his first one-year deployment.

The infantryman said that since the age of four, he and his father spent countless hours fishing. Today, casting a line and waiting for the fish to bite is a way for him to relax in the center of a war zone.

"(My father) taught that me being able to fish was great. He was like 'oh we didn't get to do all that nice, cozy stuff like that,'" Williams said.

The Columbus, Ga., native tries to fish as much as possible. On most days, he'll wake up early and fish until he has to head off to work. He said living at Camp Liberty with a lake snaking through it is a lot better situation than some of his friends serving elsewhere with the First Team in Baghdad.

"It's not that bad for us," Williams said. "I know it's rough for some of my friends. I've got friends in (3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment) and they're in a whole lot worst situation than we are. I've heard that they've already been in fire fights and a part of me wishes I was with them."

The new private barely saddled up with the First Team at the beginning of this year. He just put the biggest unit patch in the Army on his left shoulder before leaving for Iraq. Soon, he'll be wearing it on the right side.

Heading to a war zone as an infantryman set off two completely different reactions by his parents when the announcement of his deployment orders came out earlier this year.

"My mom was pretty upset about it, but my dad he was for the war before I

joined the Army," Williams said, noting with pride that his father fought in Vietnam. "He was alright with it, but my mom freaked out for a couple of days."

Since he's been in country he has been able to talk to his parents; however that's about the only family he's been able to talk to so far.

"I've talked to both my parents several times," he said. "I tried calling my girl, but she's in college, so the hours that I can call she's in class. It's a little hard."

Although contacting his girlfriend is difficult, he said she does understand what it is like to deal with deployment issues. Her father was serving with the 82nd Airborne when he was hit by a sniper. Now, he's back home.

After her father's experience she had some concerns of her own.

"She knows stuff happens," he said. "The first thing she did after (her father's incident), she called me and (said) 'You're not going on patrols are you?'"

Williams assured her that he wasn't, which put her a little more at ease about his deployment. Reassurances back home helps put loved ones at ease. A quiet dawn on the banks of Z Lake does the same for Williams.

"It's kind of hard because you got to figure out exactly what to do. These fish aren't like American fish - you just put a



Pfc. Andrew Williams, an infantryman serving with Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, feeds line through the fishing pole he brought from home before he attempts to catch some fish at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

worm on a hook and they bite it - they're a little more, I guess, picky in their diet," he said.

A year separated from loved ones can be an ordeal. Williams said his coping strategy is to throw out a line and hope something bites.



(Photos by Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

An infantryman with Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Columbus, Ga., native Pfc. Andrew Williams waits for a fish to bite at 'Z Lake' on Camp Liberty, Iraq Nov. 1. Williams brought his own fishing gear with him on his first deployment away from home.